Dear Gerry, 8/27/90

Thanks for the picture of those two wonderful children! Glad Nick enjoyed the Indian fable. If he enjoys being read to, a story that may interest you (pl) and him.

When I was his age, living in the central part of Philadelphia, electricity was just coming into general use. Our house, old but solid, substantial and ample, had not yet been wired. I can remember when that was and out joy. It may also interest you to know that those row houses were built before inside plumbing, many, many of them, including ours. Wrong. They had water but not sewer connections for toilets. We had after the sewer connection a privy on the back porch. Well, each night when I was in bed my mother sat in my child's rocking chair under the gas light and read me that day's children's story from the Philadelphia Bulletin. It was by Thornton W. Burgess. He is the guy who invented the names, Farmer Brown, Peter Rabbit, etc. Then she turned the gas off, the gas light went out and I went to sleep.

If you were not familiar with it, the houses all had gas, in pipes, like plumbing, only about a quarter or an inch, small pipes. On a wall of each room a gas pipe came out of the wall, into a swivel joint, whence it went into a pipe about 10 inches long. At its end was an elbow and another piece of pipe about 2" long join straight up. At the end was an insert that was rather thin along a cut of about a quarter of an inch. The gas came through it and when a match was put the the flame we got light from the burning gas. It was controlled and turned on and off by a petcock near the swivel joint.

That house, by the way, still had a coal and wood cookstove. I can remember when my mother got a two-burner gas thing like a hot plate to use for cooking but not for baking. A flexible hose fit over the place where the flame was and went to this simple thing of two burners. Which is also the way one then had a library lamp.

Glad Greg Stone reacted so rapidly. He's done well.

We get The Progressive and I read that article, thanks. It is consistent with my experience only because he is a lawyer they didnot dare pull some of the stuff on him they did one me. They were worse with me and they used some of my litigation when they were before fink judges to extend the inclusiveness of the legislated exemptions. That has always been their method of fighting disclosure under FOIA.

Your fear that the Saddam crisis will delay or block much needed domestic programs is unfortunately only too justified. It also obscures awful scandals. But I fear that what Bush is doing is necessary for the world as well as for us. That kind of thing must be ended and with it violence as a means of seeking desired changes, whether or not justified changes. I'm sorry that once again we are playing gendarme to the world and will bear just about all the enormous costs of all kinds.

At the same time the barbarity of taking hostages, so many of them in this instance, must not succeed and must be costly to Saddam so that it can be deterred elsewhere and forever. Otherwise there will be chaos. I fear this goes bak to Carter's desire to save lives, which saved those lives but cost others and told the bastards they could profit from it.

Our best to you all,

Harold